



# ***NEWS RELEASE***

## **PRESS OFFICE**

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### **Small Business Administration to Launch 11-City Economic Growth Tour**

**Washington** – The U.S. Small Business Administration is launching an 11-city economic growth tour this week, to meet with local entrepreneurs across the country and discuss issues important to spurring job creation. The first event will be held October 7<sup>th</sup> in Bangor, Maine.

“Small businesses play a vital role in creating opportunity for millions of Americans,” said Hector V. Barreto, SBA Administrator. “It is critical that we create an environment where entrepreneurship can flourish by giving small businesses a break on their taxes whenever possible, making their health insurance more affordable, and providing them with the information they need to succeed. It’s also important that we help small business while saving taxpayer dollars by ensuring open competition to government contracts. Finally, tearing down regulatory barriers to job creation must remain a priority of government agencies – both state and federal.”

“I am looking forward to bringing SBA’s economic growth tour to cities from Maine to New Mexico,” said Barreto. “These conferences allow us to meet with small business owners across the country, and hear firsthand what we can do to ensure even greater success.”

The regional events will enable entrepreneurs and small-business owners to meet with their local bankers, venture capitalists, resource and trade partners, and local SBA staff to get information about starting a new small business or advance an existing one. There will be a luncheon with officials from the SBA and representatives from each local community to discuss the challenges of owning a small business and how to improve opportunities for entrepreneurs.

#### **The schedule for the SBA Economic Growth Tour is as follows:**

##### **October 2003**

Bangor, ME - October 7  
Syracuse, NY - October 20

##### **November 2003**

Bend, OR – November 10  
Davenport, IA – November 18

##### **January 2004**

Jacksonville, FL – January 26

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**February 2004**

Reno, NV – February 9

Albuquerque, NM- February 23

**March 2004**

Clarksburg, WV – March 8

Green Bay, WI – March 22

**April 2004**

Region VIII – Denver, CO – April 5

Region VII – Springfield or Kansas City, MO – April 12

This year marks the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the SBA. Since 1953, the SBA has helped more than 20 million Americans start, grow and expand their businesses – placing more than \$232 billion in direct or guaranteed loans and venture capital into the hands of entrepreneurs. For information about the SBA's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary, go online to [www.sba.gov/50](http://www.sba.gov/50).

Hewlett Packard (HP) is cosponsoring the events and will provide live webcasts of many of the events. For more information, visit <http://www.sba.gov/50/regionevents.html>.

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